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ABSTRACT

Reported were the results of a survey of approximately 78 leaders in the field of education for the gifted and talented who were asked to identify priority needs and areas of greatest potential for investment by the private sector. Participants were said to have been selected on the basis of national reputation, specific accomplishments, current knowledge, practical experience, and understanding of gifted and talented education. Identified were the following priorities: coordination of resources on a national scale; development of leadership by individuals and institutions; services, especially community related services for the gifted; training of personnel, including parents, to work with the gifted; reserach, on other than academic identification techniques; and arts and humanities as both process and product for the gifted. Also identified were the following target populations: institutions, rural residents, urban residents, American Indians, Blacks, Spanish speaking people, the handicapped, women, and parents. Age groupings considered ranged from early infant education through college and lifetime learning. Appended are the survey letter and a listing of respondents. (DB)

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EDUCATION OF THE GIFTED AND TALENTED: A Role for the Private Sector

by Jane Case Williams
Office for Gifted and Talented
U.S. Office of Education

March 1974

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I INTRODUCTION

This report is the result of inquiries made to a wide variety of individuals - theoreticians, researchers, university professors, administrators, developers of community programs, consultants in State Departments of Education, executives of national organizations, federal officials, and educators of the gifted and talented. All were asked to assess evolving priorities in education of the gifted and talented, as they viewed them, especially with reference to the gifted disadvantaged, and to identify areas of greatest potential for investment by the private sector. (See appendix A letter to respondents).

The respondents provided guidance ranging from theoretical approaches to gifted education, to specific curricular needs. Many respondents included descriptions of programs or proposals germane to these priorities which could be immediately fundable.

The study was prepared by the Office for Gifted and Talented of the U.S. Office of Education, at the suggestion of Mr. Scott McVay, Executive Director of the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, New York City. It is intended to assist foundations and other private sector agencies interested in current investment in education of the gifted and talented, i.e. investment which would complement existing efforts, and which could produce initiatives of far-reaching impact for which general public sector support is unlikely at this time.

Respondents were recommended on the basis of their national reputation, specific accomplishments, current knowledge, practical experience, and understanding of gifted and talented education. (See appendix B respondent list.) Where the data was amenable to statistical handling, tabulations were made; however, the material provided by respondents is so rich in content that inclusion of verbatim excerpts is used to support the discussion of priorities.

II THE POPULATION, THE PROBLEM, AND THE CHALLENGE

The population:

Gifted and talented children have been defined as "those identified by professionally qualified persons who by virtue of outstanding abilities, are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society". *(Education of Gifted and Talented:* Report to Congress by the U.S. Commissioner of Education, 1971). A minimum of 3 to 5 percent of the school population can be considered gifted, although the criteria by which the population is identified is so frequently not known or is misused, that administrators and teachers frequently fail to recognize the existence of high potential children in their schools, especially those who are culturally different or economically disadvantaged.

The problem:

One of the most misunderstood and misused identifiers is the "IQ" or standardized intelligence test. The use of this instrument on a population for which the test has not been designed – for example minority, culturally diverse, or low socio-economic status children, – cannot always be expected to identify the potentially high achiever.

The problem has been succinctly stated as follows:

> . . . for all intents and purposes our conception and identification of the gifted and the talented are encapsulated most generally in performance on the aptitude test of intellect. . . . if I had to state a single priority, I would say that the conception of giftedness be broadened from the *single criterion of intellect* to the *multiple criteria of talent:* talent for scholastic achievement to be sure, but also talent for artistic achievement, talent for mechanical achievement, talent for expressive achivement, talent for social achievement, talent for altruistic achievement. . . . If this were done, numerous children with aptitudes other than academic would be identified, special programs for them could be devised, and an enormous amount of talent, the most precious resource of the nation, would be conserved and encouraged. (Getzels)

Identification of culturally different or disadvantaged gifted is also hampered by an unwarranted but common attitude of those whose professional energies are devoted to the disadvantaged and educationally deprived, even within federal agencies which administer legislative programs serving educationally disadvantaged minorities. These are the people who most often openly oppose education for the gifted and talented as not relevant to their target population. Thus, paradoxically, we see that the most neglected gifted--those of high potential among the disadvantaged or culturally diverse are ignored by those who educate them.

> Knowing the area, I can honestly say that there are few programs that provide assistance for the gifted and talented culturally different child. I will qualify this by saying that several Upward Bound, bilingual and a few programs that have made creative use of title monies are exceptions. . . .
>
> In most cases, however, these programs have had to manipulate in order to provide for the very, very bright child. The reason is that most federally funded programs have been predicated on failure and as a result, the populations in these programs reflect more the negative than the positive. (Bransford)

The challenge:

The preceding presents the gifted disadvantaged population as one worthy of special attention from both public and private agencies. Education of the gifted and talented in itself is justifiable, based on the productive outcomes of special attention given to the child of high potential, e.g., ballerinas, football players, astronauts. The potential for productivity among minorities is all but untapped; *the expected return to society on investment in the gifted and talented among the disadvantaged makes this the most promising and cost effective of all public or private sector efforts with this group.*

The private sector is to be commended for their expression of interest in this population; the Office for Gifted and Talented is enthusiastic about the potential interaction between foundations and the federal efforts to deliver services to the nation's greatest national resource--gifted and talented children and youth.

The overwhelming strength and quality of response received from leaders of national significance in various areas of education indicates that education for the gifted disadvantaged is an idea whose time has indeed come! It is not surprising that foundations, with their unique potential to initiate trenchant policies are now in the forefront of a great national priority.

Education of the gifted and talented has surged and faded as an educational priority in recent decades-- As one respondent put it,

> . . . education for the gifted is like the weather--it comes and goes with the winds of public interest. Programs have been anchored to the effort of one or a few people. As a result, they have been transitory, idiosyncratic and fundamentalistic, not generalizable or continuously acceptable. (Freehill)

The emphasis by the U.S. Office of Education, individual States, and the recent legislative actions of the Unted States Congress combine to secure for gifted education a legitimate and continuing place in the educational framework of the nation.

The attitude of egalitarianism in education as precluding special attention to groups with unusual needs is fast disappearing with respect to a multitude of special populations, e.g., the poor, the handicapped, the migrants, and now the gifted. The true goal of education in a democracy was stated in 1958 in the Rockefeller Report:

> By insisting that *equality* means an exactly similar exposure to education, regardless of the variations in interest and capacity of the student, we are in fact inflicting a subtle but serious form of inequality upon our young people.

There is great excitement in the opportunity to bring together people who have a long history of considering the problems of the gifted and talented with a select group of foundations whose own history is one of long interest and commitment to education and the disadvantaged. A careful matching of good programs with the necessary financial support will serve as a fulcrum to influence subsequent public policy.

The following sections of this report support the major areas of priority identified for private sector attention. At the third seminar meeting on March 28, presentation will be made of outstanding ideas which can contribute to meeting needs in these most important priorities. The Office for Gifted and Talented is ready to assist in consultation with foundations on the ways in which individual investment may be made to achieve the greatest potential impact.

III THE FINDING

The areas of greatest need in education of the gifted disadvantaged clearly emerge as

1. *Coordination* of resources on a national scale
2. Development of *leadership* by individuals and institutions
3. Services, especially *community* related services for the gifted
4. *Training* of personnel, including *parents*, to work with the gifted
5. *Research*, especially on other than academic *identification* techniques
6. *Arts and humanities* as both process and product for the gifted

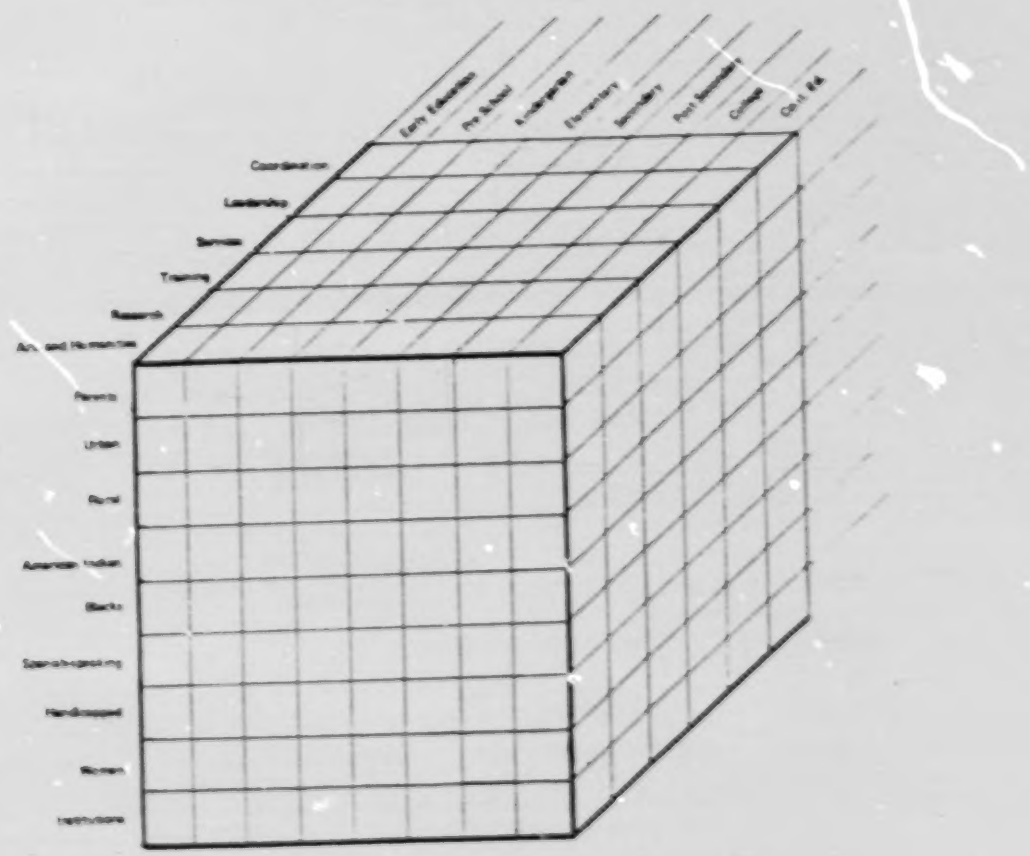
The model following shows a functional analysis of these present priorities and the many dimensions by which they are viewed.

The target populations for this model were identified by respondents to include these overlapping categories: institutions, rural, urban, American Indians, Blacks, Spanish Speaking (Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Cubans), handicapped, women, and parents. Foreseeably, this could extend to other ethnic groups such as Italians, Polish, Japanese, or Eskimos.

The chronological age groupings (and styles of education) range from early infant education and pre-kindergarten through elementary and secondary school, post-secondary, college, and continuing or lifetime learning.

In order to accommodate the variety of identified needs within each of the six priority areas, six models are required. Ultimately, each segment of the model can be matched to program action and private sector support – (figure 1 follows).

FIGURE 1



IV PRIORITY AREAS

1. COORDINATION OF RESOURCES

Efforts expended to achieve a minimal level of coordination of projects promise some benefits in the use of scarce resources. An information base, better communication and cooperative attitudes are among the necessary preconditions.

Changing Attitudes

> If we are to do something about the children, then we should use what is available to us through the behavioral sciences about changing attitudes of people. . . . there are at least six steps involved:
>
> 1. Awareness
> 2. Information
> 3. Assessment
> 4. Modification
> 5. Piloting
> 6. Institutionalization
>
> (Olivero)

Jointly Supported Coordination

> I suspect the specific action to take is to see if any of the private foundations would care to take on as a specific activity any one of the ideas outlined in the preceding. . . . all of the individual activities are a part of a very complex whole. . . . and (foundations) should decide which parts they want to take on in terms of the priorities of their own organizations. This means that some sort of "office" will need to be established to be the flag-bearer and the members of that office might be jointly supported by the various private foundations. (Olivero)

Combining Resources

> I am trying to bring several categories of the private sector together in the hope that they would stimulate each other and compete in excellence and generosity. . . . every effort should be made to include business and industry and their service organizations on a "matching funds" or similar arrangement.
>
> If this idea finds acceptance at the March meeting, I guess the first contributor would be the one who hosts a brainstorming conference of representatives of all the different private sectors. At that point, I venture to say one could almost sit back and watch the competition for the ideal "healthy mix" of various sectors for the best program. (Ginsberg)

Accurate Information

> A function to be carried out by a coordinating office might be to create an information base, using face-to-face contacts with members of networks developed by the National/State Leadership Training Institute for the Gifted and the Talented, to provide accurate information about programs and projects. (Jackson)

2. LEADERSHIP

This section contains suggestions for finding more individuals with leadership potential and suggestions of ways to enhance the leadership of institutions.

Life Outside School

> Recent studies indicate that many gifted children have so little contact with the realities of the real world that they are unable to come to grips with it and often are protesting and failing to utilize their talents constructively in dealing with the world's real problems. . . . More recently, the work of Judge Mary Kohler, in the National Commission on Resources for Youth, has found that gifted children tend to become much more constructive in their development when they have opportunities for various types of participation in work or in voluntary service in their community and thus deal more directly with what life is about outside of school. (Tyler)

Leadership of Youth: A New Energy Source

> We have instruments and procedures which make it possible to 'certify as gifted' most of the school aged individuals with superior intellectual ability. . . . However, there is a very large percentage of school aged children whose intellectual talents go unnoticed because they are so hard to identify. Many comprehensive secondary schools do a very good job of providing for the academically able student, however, those students who do not move well through the academic program provide an energy source we should direct more productively. (French)

Reaching the System as a Whole

> Another priority . . . means of institutionalizing programs for the gifted. . . . we must be able to reach the educational *systems* as well as individual educators. It is not sufficient that a program for gifted depend solely on the work of one or two dedicated individuals within a school . . . we must make education for the gifted an integral part of education in the United States. (Bernal)

Community Power

Leadership of community programs and the problems of private support to a project partly supported by the public schools.

> Innovative programs with maverick leadership have not received endorsement and support from "locked in" bureaucracies, and the private foundations have until now failed to assume this responsibility. My foundation experience has been . . . total frustration. . . .in the early years some local foundations came up with nominal grants for one-year periods, not renewed because of a policy of regarding the public school administration as the responsible body. . . . You may ask why, then, did the D.C. Youth Orchestra survive and grow? The *power and strength of community organization is the answer.* . . . The parents of the beneficiaries of this program recognized its uniqueness and its contribution to the development of their children and to themselves. . . . Because of these strengths, and having survived the lean years, this particular program now has various public monies keeping it alive and creating some opportunities for entry into the establishment. However, threats of weakening the program are always present and it is for this reason, too, that I . . . strongly recommend the value of private support to develop a strong prototype which the public sector would . . . support. (Banner)

Technical Assistance Centers

> . . . provide support for technical assistance and short-term training centers for the gifted. Four of these scattered around the country could be funded at the rate of 250 or 350 thousand dollars per year each, and would provide continued help and assistance to state departments. The TA Centers would call upon a variety of experts in specialty fields, (i.e. curriculum, measurement, program development, teacher training, etc.) and those experts would be on call to meet the particular needs of the clients (whether they be local school systems or big departments of education or even universities). These Technical Assistance centers would then provide a stable resource and back-up that would support new programs in their initiation, would provide intensive training for teachers to receive specific skills, and give specific guidance to local policy makers on quality program support in their own area. (Gallagher)

Demonstration Centers

> Many times the potential achievement of gifted and talented students is underestimated by both educators and the public. . . . the usual reaction to our request for names of students who might be interested in applying for one of the Exploration Scholarships is that no student in the school is capable of performing at that level. While it is true that . . . few, if any, peform at the level necessary to win a scholarship, it is due to the lack of opportunity to develop the necessary skills rather than the lack of ability. . . . the establishment of Demonstration Centers for students with special interests and talents might be one way of showing the public and the schools what these students can actually accomplish. (Mullins)

Expanding University Resources

> . . . provide support grants to four or five universities that would allow them to strengthen and build their training staff so that they could develop a meaningful program in the gifted going beyond a one-man department which is all too common these days. This would mean that if a $25,000 grant were given to five universities for another $125,000, we would have strengthened the traditional training programs and perhaps obtained a specific commitment from certain universities to pursue this area more vigorously than they have in the past thus opening the door for systematic advanced training for people in this area. (Gallagher)

3. SERVICES

Several suggestions about priorities for services are offered. The problem of unusually expensive materials and equipment is cited, as is the need for professional help for young, minority group gifted with psychosocial problems. Finally, two statements emphasize the importance of developing community resources.

Applying Findings of Creativity Research

> Development of creative ability is . . . the greatest need for support. The past twenty years have demonstrated substantial, perhaps overwhelming, research evidence that this crucial ability can be developed. Now the need is for widespread programs *applying* the findings of the accumulated research. (Parnes)

Priorities

> Essentially the priorities should be considered on the basis of reaching those children with the greatest unmet needs, the underachievers, and the underdeveloped such as the culturally different gifted and those others who need *both* individual guidance and challenge . . . and those adults who will have the most influence, directly or indirectly, on gifted and talented children. (Bruch)

Unusual Expenses

> Unusual materials and specialized equipment are needed for programs which may be available only to the very affluent communities, e.g., gas chromatography and chromatograph equipment; phase contrast microscope; computers, portable television cameras, recorder cassettes, and receivers; art equipment, such as heavy duty kilns and photography instruments; and special materials, such as the Holt's Social Studies Program and Nystrom's Maps-globes Program, costing $2,000-$3,000 each. (Miley)

Students' Needs

> Young, gifted minority students are in dire need of supportive services which local educational agencies seem to be unable to afford. The old myth that the gifted can care for themselves is nowhere so abused as in this area. Through hard experience, we have learned that these young people more often need help than would be expected statistically from our experience with normal children. Psychosocial problems requiring professional help head the list--apparently because of the intense conflicts the gifted minority youths face in the street culture; the economics, the family structure, and lack of understanding at home; and the unavailability, except in school, of help in vital decision-making situations concerning his work, ambitions, career, and his obvious differences. (Spiegel)

Community Resources

> . . . the greatest need for investment by private foundations in education of the gifted and talented, especially with respect to the culturally different and the disadvantaged gifted, is in making available community resources for talent development. The more affluent communities are more *knowledgeable* and more *aggressive* in terms of *creating opportunities* for talent identification and development. Areas with minority groups and disadvantaged gifted do not have these resources--and the talented in these areas are even more disadvantaged. (Passow)

Using Available Human Resources

> . . . no public school faculty contains a rich enough variety of talents to accommodate the right variety of special interests and aptitudes of all its gifted and talented children; . . . no community, however ghettoized, rural, or otherwise deprived it may be, *lacks* a rich enough variety of such much-needed talents. *Every* neighborhood has its professional people--the physician, dentist, engineer, scientist, lawyer, writer, musician -- who never have formal, sustained contact with gifted youngsters but who could be persuaded and trained to assume such a role in or out of school hours. The objective is to mobilize these valuable human resources to inspire the gifted and talented or at least attract them to their respective domains of activity and to work these exceptional youth in a master-apprentice relationship in a carefully planned program. (Tannenbaum)

4. TRAINING

Teachers, guidance counselors, parents are seen as needing specific help in several dimensions in the examples which follow.

Attitudes

> Criteria need to be established for selection of people who should receive skill enhancement for teaching the gifted. . . . Of primary importance in selecting future teachers . . . would be attitude toward giftedness. (Tittle)

Counseling Needs

> What is needed is a strong thrust in pre-service and in-service training of teachers who work with minority children . . . It has always been my concern that after minority children have been identified and special provision made for their "differences" . . . that the guidance structure of a large school system is not specifically aware of the opportunities and responsibilities for providing for their support. Much of the time guidance emphasizes disciplinary aspects, remediation . . . (Blackburn)

Creativity for Parents

> Parent effectiveness training--perhaps sponsored by a mental health or family oriented organization . . . it would be great for all the scattered parent groups to have some kind of coordination and do something with their concern. . . . "how to become more dynamically involved in your child's creativity, a little more personal than what the general parent group can do." (Kauffman)

Training for Parents of Young Children

> There is almost universal evidence of effects from infant and pre-school experience . . . damage from the unresponsive environment and enhancement where there is excitement, interaction and affection. From the lessons of Head Start and from the biographical study of creative and productive people, it seems clear that work with parents of young, bright children is most economical and humane. *Foundation money might reasonably support some model programs in which professionals work with parents of pre-school children.* (Freehill)

In-Service that Works

> First of all, . . . some provision for teacher in-service education--a trite, overworked area--but vital to the implementation of any program. If we could get something like the National Squaw Valley LTI Conference and the regional conferences on a local level or even a State level . . . it would help tremendously. Also, . . . some money available for teachers in a district to travel to . . . model programs. Such travel money for teachers seldom comes easy in a school district's budget. I remember the old Western States Small Schools Project sponsored by the Ford Foundation . . . The basis of that project was to get teachers exposed to many different ideas . . . and then use those experiences as a springboard to their own situation. It worked. (McGuire)

Special Training Needs of Teachers

> . . . teachers, experienced or not, all ill-equipped to cope with the specific needs of the gifted. The teachers need opportunities to learn new ways, develop rapport with a different type of student, accept the flexibility and additional responsibilities inherent in more responsive organizational plans, and become more secure in teaching young people who are likely to be more intelligent and more talented than they themselves. Training of this type requires funding for the hiring of consultants, funds for classroom substitutes to relieve teachers for visitations to other schools for exposure to different techniques, money to insure appropriate curriculum development, funds to cover the costs of attendance at work conferences frequently held far from home. . . . Private sector money is also necessary to create libraries of professional books, journals, and other materials designed to encourage teacher growth. . . . Even the cost of graduate school tuition should be, at least in part, subsidized for the teacher of the gifted to help increase his effectiveness. (Spiegel)

Institutional Priorities

> Differences in teacher attitudes and actions toward the gifted and talented will only take place when such differences, attitudes and actions are placed in relatively high priority by teacher training institutions. (Blackburn)

5. RESEARCH

This section contains four suggestions for research most needed to answer basic questions about different kinds of giftedness, different kinds of talent; followed by two suggestions for longitudinal studies, both of which include concern for practical applications. Finally, a topic related to policy planning is discussed.

> The most fruitful research . . . first in importance is the development of successful and economical programs . . . structuring different educational programs for different kinds of giftedness. This would include sex differences, ethnic differences, and differences in types of ability. (Keating)

> . . . research in the area of identification . . . is sorely needed. I suggest research projects which are designed to secure measures of potential not based on achievements and performances. (Sanborn)

> There is considerable evidence that gifted and creative work are hinged to intellectual processes beyond association, memory, sequencing and the like. These processes are not well identified and we have limited information to guide teaching these more complex and personal modes of understanding. *Foundation investment in research might be focused on studies which define effective psychological processes and/or uncover the conditions which support and enlarge these processes.* (Freehill)

> I envision . . . an approach to research in this area as being more . . . real-world oriented than the kinds of research which typically take place in highly controlled situations. . . . For example, I would like to see a target area of a particular inner city isolated for a total identification thrust. Highly trained researchers in a variety of academic and non-academic areas should work in close cooperation with both educational and community persons in investigating a variety of means for the early and continuous identification of specific talents. . . . and students who are subsequently identified would be carefully followed for a relatively long period of time in order to determine the efficiency and practicality of the procedures developed. (Renzulli)

> I suggest that we urge some foundations to undertake a small number of longitudinal case studies in very gifted or talented minority children, so that we may do some exploratory work in the hope of uncovering some *basic traits of giftedness across cultures* and *improve our methods of identification.* (Bernal)

Dr. Ralph W. Tyler has suggested a research topic of high priority for the development of national planning efforts:

> "What proportion of gifted and talented children will require special education services in order to fulfill their potential for self-development and contribution to society? What proportion will develop optimally without education services beyond those normally received by all children?"

Dr. Tyler noted that the strongest motivation for governmental assistance programs seems to come from the desire to help those who cannot, for various reasons, help themselves. Some gifted individuals show great promise early and later achieve in accordance with such promise. Others, of equally great promise, never achieve in any noteworthy manner. For example, a gifted girl who has no idea of her own abilities is scarcely in a position to select optimum educational experiences from those which may be offered, and her chances for reaching an appropriate level of learning might be greatly enhanced by certain types of self-knowledge. What is the probability that she will gain such-self knowledge in the normal course of events, without any special educational assistance? We do not know, but we could design a research project to illumine such questions. (Jackson)

6. ARTS AND HUMANITIES

Critical gaps are noted in two contexts – federal programs and schools serving minority youth. Multiple outcomes, affective as well as cognitive are cited for arts programs.

A Critical Need

> The Endowment (National Endowment for the Humanities) receives a good number of requests for aid to courses and programs which teach the creative arts: painting, musical performance, creative writing, etc. We do not ordinarily support such programs because they are oriented towards performance, rather than apprehension of materials. On the other hand, the Endowment for the Arts does not ordinarily support such programs either, as they do not fall within the realm of professional performance. The result is a need unanswered by federal agencies generally. . . . Here may be one area worthy of . . . (foundation) interest. Courses and programs in the creative arts are excellent arenas for the discovery and encouragement of the gifted and talented, at all ages and levels. (Rosenblatt)

To Expand Opportunities

> One notion having to do with the detection and nurturing of talent in the ghettos which I would like to see attempted would involve making funds available to the principal and staff of high schools with large minority enrollments. These funds would be spent to enable highly gifted individual students to (a) receive extra academic instruction, music lessons, etc., while still enrolled, and (b) to pay their first year's tuition, or some part thereof, at the college or art or music school of their choice. One obstacle to taking an interest in the gifted among the "disadvantaged" is that those who teach them can't do much for them. A school which could do something for at least some of its most gifted students might get a lift as an institution and give a lift to the aspirations of its more talented pupils. (Ward, F. C.)

Centers for the Expressive Arts

> Centers for the Expressive Arts is another alternative for the disadvantaged talented. Students express themselves through art, music, drama, and creative writing. . . . students . . . develop original thinking, judgment, decision-making and taste, as well as personal and cultural identity. (Miley)

Multiple Talents

> In considering gifted and talented children, we have here not merely a bias but evidence as well that this category should include, as Commissioner Marland says, those who are artistically talented. Our experience has been that students recruited and admitted primarily on the basis of evidence of exceptional artistic talent--such that there is real potential for developing a professional performing career--tend to have multiple talents and exceptional capabilities peaking in artistic, academic and social areas. These students are not just budding artists, but they are gifted persons whose interests and abilities are surfacing and being expressed at the moment for a variety of reasons in the arts. (Stone)

Handicapped Gifted

> . . . I want to mention an example of an application of the arts to the disadvantaged that is not immediately apparent. We have had here several handicapped students (e.g., a deaf pianist, a double amputee veteran in guitar, and polio victims in guitar and directing) and are presently involved in a mutually beneficial, cooperative work and exchange between our institution and the State's School for the Deaf in Morganton. . . . talented students with hearing disabilities often seek (like other disadvantaged minorities) to participate fully in the mainstream, be that in the arts, politics or whatever, without being sidelined in a special category of theatre for the deaf . . . We are excited by this two-way mix of the artistically talented and those gifted though physically disadvantaged. (Stone)

V CONCLUSION

This, then, is a picture of national priorities in education of the gifted disadvantaged in 1974. No one foundation or agency can hope to address all of these needs. There is, however, the opportunity for all to participate in the program of action which will ultimately respond to these priorities. Through such actions, a contribution of inestimable value will have been made to the preservation and development of the nation's gifted youth--its most priceless resource.

APPENDIX A

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202

Our office has been given an unusual opportunity to offer recommendations for private sector (in this case, foundations) investment in education of the gifted and talented. A group of foundation executives has requested that we develop a roster of priorities and programmatic ideas which could productively be supported by private resources. These ideas will be shared with the foundation representatives, and may result in expanded private sector support of gifted and talented education throughout the country.

Public sector interest, both State and Federal, is increasing rapidly, as you know. This renewed public interest is in great part due to the continued influence of advocates for education of the gifted and talented, and the expressions of need by the population to be served. With the multitude of priorities which continually confront education, however, it is probably not realistic to expect total assumption of responsibility by public sources for education of the gifted, nor is this a necessarily desirable result. Private resources offer the means for providing a "healthy mix" in education through complementing the public programs, and have often been used to support prototypes which are later widely adopted. The margin of flexibility of this pluralistic approach is the very reason that there is a tremendous need for stimulus and investment by the private sector in program initiatives for the gifted and talented.

The Office for Gifted and Talented serves both as the coordinator of Federal activities in education of the gifted and as advocate with the States and with private agencies. The enclosed article by the recent Commissioner of Education, Sidney P. Marland, gives a useful statement of the expectations for the Federal government role in education of the gifted and talented, and is helpful in distinguishing the appropriate areas for non-federal investment.

Because you have had so much experience in gifted education, we would like to have your recommendations to share with the foundation executives at a March meeting. Could you take the time to (1) identify areas of greatest need for investment by private foundations in

education of the gifted and talented, especially with respect to the culturally different and the disadvantaged gifted; and (2) briefly describe specific programs or other activities you may know of which are responsive to the needs you have identified and might be suitable for continued support or replication.

In order for this information to be of maximum usefulness, I should receive it no later than February 18, 1974. I am enclosing an addressed mailing label for your response, and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Jane Case Williams

Jane Case Williams
Deputy Director
Education of the Gifted
and Talented

APPENDIX B

LIST OF RESPONDENTS

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